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Kabul AgFair Breaks Sales Records

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Approved By:

Robin Tilsworth

Prepared By:

Jahrullah Safi & Dena Bunnel

Report Highlights:

The Kabul International AgFair was held October 30-November 1, 2013, at Badam Bagh Research Farm in Kabul, Afghanistan. The event, organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), sought to expand trade opportunities for Afghan farmers and traders in both local and international markets through exhibitor booths, Business-to-Business networking sessions and a Knowledge Center focusing on production, packaging and marketing. Exhibitor booths totaled 200: 150 booths from local businesses, 40 booths from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 10 booths from international companies from India, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Egypt and Sri Lanka. Attendance was estimated at 70,000. Onsite sales are estimated at Afs 57 million (approximately USD\$ 1 million at current exchange rate). Contracts for future sales are estimated at approximately USD\$9-10 million including a \$1 million saffron contract signed with a company from India. MAIL reported that these sales were nearly 50 percent higher than the 2012 Ag Fair.

The Kabul International AgFair was held October 30-November 1, 2013, at Badam Bagh Research Farm in Kabul, Afghanistan. The three-day event, which saw approximately 70,000 visitors, sought to expand trade opportunities for Afghan farmers and traders in both local and international markets. Visitors included high-level representatives from the Afghan and U.S. Governments, local and international businesses and the general public.

Organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), the AgFair focused on marketing of Afghan agricultural products, innovation in the agriculture sector and identifying consumer preferences. Through the Business-to-Business networking sessions, local farmers and traders had the opportunity to connect and build relationships with regional and international traders, and international companies were able to identify new business opportunities. The AgFair also featured a Knowledge Center that provided informational sessions on production, processing packaging and marketing. By targeting international markets, the AgFair hopes to increase exports and improve overall sales.



Exhibitors booths at the AgFair.



MAIL Research Directorate displaying products from research farm.

The two hundred exhibitors included 150 booths from local businesses, 40 booths from NGOs and 10 booths from international companies from India, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Egypt and Sri Lanka. Private sector participants included producers (mostly organized by province or by sector), food processors, agriculture machinery dealers, irrigation technology suppliers, packaging companies, storage and transportation companies and others.



Thirty kilogram cabbage on display at exhibitor booth.

Visitors had the opportunity to purchase goods from many of the exhibitors, and MAIL reported that sales from these products were nearly 50 percent higher than the previous year's Ag Fair. Onsite sales for the three-day event are estimated at Afs57 million (approximately USD\$ 1 million at current exchange rate). Contracts for future sales are estimated at approximately USD\$9-10 million including a \$1 million saffron contract signed with a company from India. The 2013 International AgFair also saw increased participation by women's associations and businesses.

In the future, MAIL plans to arrange weekly farmers' markets at Badam Bagh Research Farm to help farmers connect with processing and packaging companies for their agricultural goods. This will build the capacity of farmers to have better markets for their goods domestically and internationally.

The AgFair also saw many high-level visitors, including Afghanistan's Second Vice President Mohammad Karim Khalili, the Governor of Kabul Province and several Parliamentarians. The Minister of MAIL; deputy ministers from MAIL, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Urban Development; and Provincial Directors of Agriculture from 20 provinces also attended. From the U.S. Government, Deputy Ambassador P. Michael McKinley and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director Bill Hammink attended the event, as well as the Minister-Counselor for USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service and the Acting Director of USAID's Office of Agriculture.

The event was organized by the Private Sector Development Directorate (PSDD) of MAIL and financed primarily by the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ). USDA's Capacity Building and Change Management program (CBCMP) assisted in the planning and promotion of the event. The Knowledge Center and the Business-to-Business networking sessions were facilitated by USAID's Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program (CHAMP) and the Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives – North, East and West (IDEA-NEW) program.



Afghan farmer from Helmand showcasing his pomegranates.

For more information concerning the Kabul International AgFair, contact:

Private Sector Development Directorate (PSDD)

Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)

Kart-i-Sakhi, Kabul, Afghanistan

Phone: +93-798-999-704 / +93-752-063-531 / +93-777-800-415

Website: www.agfair.gov.af

E-mail: agfair@mail.gov.af

